Design Fundamentals
ART 320 Online

VALUE ASSIGNMENT – 8 week class

Before you begin:

Read Design Basics: Chapters 9, 10, 12
Read Value Lecture Intro & watch PowerPoint Presentation – Value
(see Content>Course Materials> Projects 2nd Half of the Semester>
Project 6 - Value)
Review Lynda.com movies in Essential Training Adobe Illustrator, CS5,
#5,6, and 12, working with groups and layers, and path editing.

When you complete your design, upload it to the DROPBOX> Project 6
– Value. This assignment is worth 100 points. You are required to
critique one other student's work for an additional 10 points. I will
send out an announcement as soon as the student gallery for this
project is available and you'll have one week from that date to submit
your critique to the DISCUSSIONS– Project 6 – Value.

Assignment Overview

In this first assignment focusing on the element of **VALUE**, you will be
building a composition from an initially placed photograph into
Illustrator. The photo should be able to be simplified into shapes of
tone (potentially) ranging from black to white. I am not recommending
that you use *Live Trace* for this assignment. It will most likely produce
far too many uninteresting shapes and the strength of this exercise is
in using the principle of **ECONOMY**. In general, this means to *mildly*
distill, summarize or abstract. This usually happens when an image is
translated from one medium to another – such as from your
photograph to a design comprised of simple shapes. The form this
abstraction takes is a matter of degrees and personal preference.
Mostly, the artist is seeking some type of essential information. You
have already had experience in drawing with the pen and/or pencil
tools, using a photo as a template. I won't repeat how to do that here.

Alice Neel   *Self Portrait*   Willem De Kooning   *Woman*

In each of the artists' paintings above, the figure has been abstracted and simplified. Neel's image is a good deal more **NATURALISTIC,** while De Kooning employs a more aggressive, and open or blurred series of shapes that leads toward a statement that conveys a strong emotions or impending motion or urgency. His work falls into the school of art known as **ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM**.

Objectives

You can choose to simplify your photo and remain fairly true to its original contours, or you can distort, edit, and alter the shapes for a different interpretation. You may work in a particular **KEY,** and/or you may have multiple 'keys' in your composition. The *minimum* requirement of tones of value is six. In addition, you can create a value using either a shape filled with flat tone, graded tone (using a gradient), or an optical blend of textures to produce a particular value. I would caution you against using too much of the latter suggestions – gradients and textures. You may use atmospheric perspective as I did in my example below to suggest deep space, or you can refer to a

shallow space as my second example suggests. And finally, you must have an example of **Simultaneous Contrast** evident in one or more areas of your composition. The chart below depicts a simultaneous contrast effect in a value scale of 11 steps.


Simultaneous contrast is an optical phenomenon. When a smaller area of value or color is presented against a larger field of a different color or value, the larger area will seem to be optically 'adding' its complement into the smaller area. This occurs because our brain seeks to increase contrast between the two areas. The middle gray stripe seems darker when seen against the lighter value rectangles and it seems lighter when seen against the darker rectangles.

As you can also imagine, this phenomenon occurs with hue and intensity perception dependent upon context. The importance of simultaneous contrast for the artist/designer is that value and color decisions must be made in concert with context. (Even the yellow at the ends of the chart looks different from the light end to the dark end).

Process

For the first example below, I placed the photo in Illustrator, made it a template and proceeded to **draw**, with the pen tool, every individual shape starting with the furthest back most shapes and working my way into the foreground. Of course, you can arrange shapes in whatever stacking order you choose in Illustrator, but this process helped me to order my fills later in the process. I used the principle of atmospheric perspective to inform my decisions about gray tones. I have more than one example of simultaneous contrast, but the most effective one is the shaded shapes on the jet's fuselage. Each triangular shape is the same value of very dark gray.
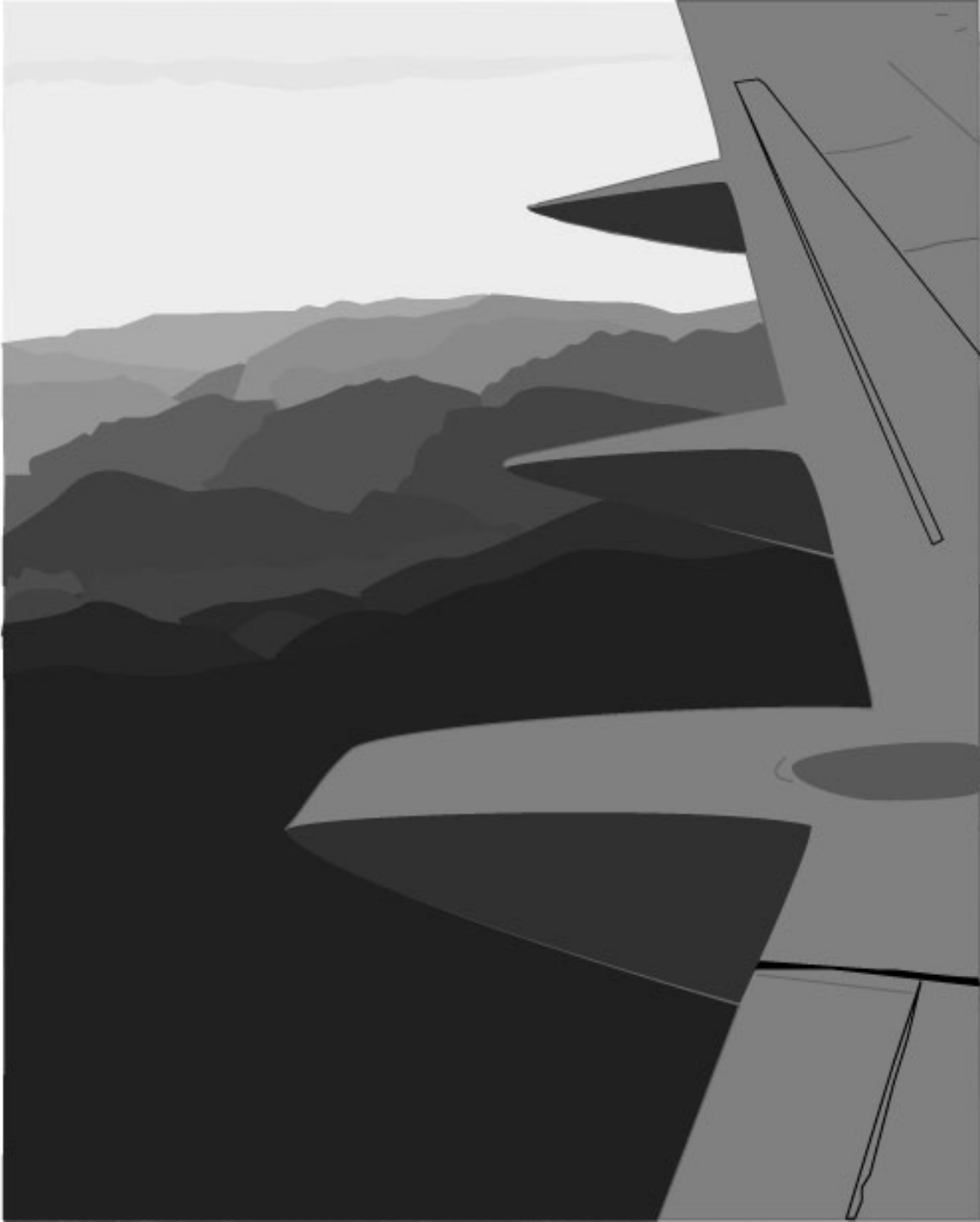
This design was drawn and filled using the traditional (pre Live Paint/Trace) method of building shapes from a photo, one at a time, drawn with the pen tool and carefully closed as completed. It is still the most reliable method to build shapes if you don't want to enslave yourself to the photo. If course, besides drawing from a photo, you can work from direct observation and build any shapes you wish

and/or draw directly into Illustrator from hand drawn thumbnails and scan.
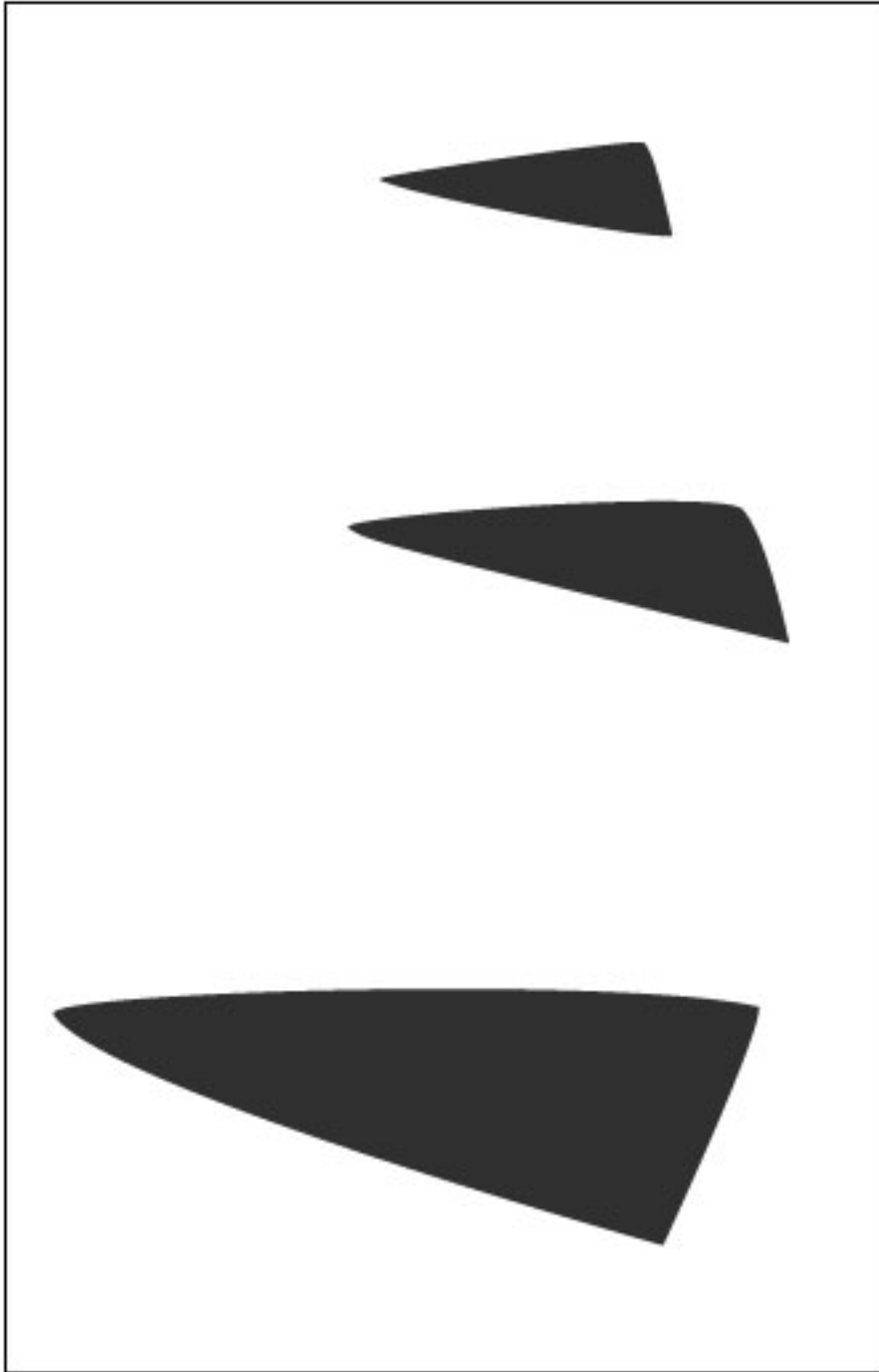
The above shapes were copied from the jet file. They are the same value.

This is the photo from which the design above was derived.

In the design below, the image was again placed as a photo and the shapes were drawn on top of the image, but this time I did not try to draw each shape as a closed shape. When I finished the drawing, I selected all the shapes, and filled each area using the Live Paint tool. I continued to adjust values until I was satisfied with the final version you see here.

This version has a, notwithstanding, weaker version of simultaneous contrast – mostly seen in the facial skin area between forehead and neck.

While I like the version using outlines for each shape better artistically, it does not allow for the effect of simultaneous contrast. Black lines effectively close off the optical interaction of shapes of value and color.

When you finish this project, upload it as a yourLastNameFirstInitial_Proj6.ai file to the DROPBOX link, Project 6 - VALUE. Make sure you check the link file button when you save the file so I can see your original photo or scan from which you built the design. If you need to, you can zip this file.

The photo below is where this image began. I cropped and simplified it quite a bit.